Legislative Advocacy



It Doesn't Have To Be So Scary



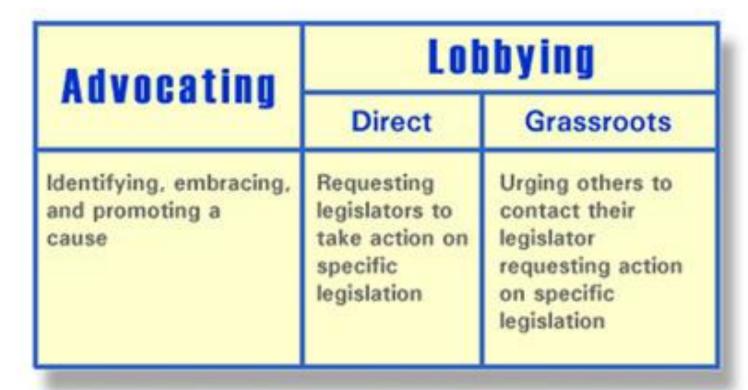
The Importance of Legislative Advocacy



The E's of an Effective Injury Prevention Program

- Fducation
- > Engineering
- Environment
- Encouragement
- > Fyaluation
- > EMS
- Enactment and Enforcement

Advocacy vs. Lobbying



Source: Gear Up for Capitol Hill, ProLiteracy

Advocacy vs. Lobbying

- Speaking on behalf of yourself
- Speaking on behalf of your agency/business
- What if you can't LOBBY? (as per your business directive)



Why Advocate - Legislate

- Laws promoting "Best Practice" standards
- Laws serve as a tool for education
- Capturing a % of the population that only comply due to the fear of "getting caught"
- Policy changes can influence the behavior of a large group of people.

BEST PRACTICES FOR BUCKLING UP CHILDREN

To help you provide the safest way to travel with your child, the North Dakota Department of Health offers the following best practice recommendations:

Children younger than 13 should ride in the back seat.



REAR-FACING

Children should ride rear-facing until at least 2 years of age. Two types of car seats are available for rear-facing: Infant Seats – Most of these seats can be used until 22-35 pounds. Use them until the highest weight limit or until the child's head is within one inch of the too of the seat.

Convertible Seats - These seats can be used rear-facing and forward-facing. Most can be used rear-facing up to 30-40 pounds. Use them rear-facing until the highest weight or height limit allowed by the manufacturer.



FORWARD-FACING

When children are at least 2 years of age or have outgrown the highest rear-facing limits of their car seat, they may ride forward-facing in a car seat with a harness. Use the seat until the child reaches the harness's highest weight limit allowed by the manufacturer. Car seats with harnesses can be used up to 40-100 pounds.



BOOSTERS

When children have outgrown the harness in their forward-facing car seat, they may be moved to a booster. The child should be at least 40 pounds and at least 4 years of age. Keep the child in the booster until about 4'9" tall or the seat belt fits correctly over the child's body. Most boosters can be used up to 80-120 pounds.



SEAT BELT

Children should use a seat belt when it fits over the body correctly. For a seat belt to fit properly, the lap belt must lie snugly across the upper thighs and be snug across the shoulder and chest. It should not lie on the stomach or across the neck.

FOR YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY:

Select a car seat based on your child's age, size, development and maturity. Weight and height information will be on labels attached to the car seat and in the instruction manual.

Register your car seat, check for recalls and monitor the expiration date of the seat.

Secure your child in the seat snugly, following the car seat instructions.

Install the seat tightly in your vehicle using the seat belt OR lower anchors and tether (LATCH) system. Follow the car seat instructions and vehicle owner's manual.

Need help with your car seat? Visit a car seat checkup or child passenger safety technician for assistance. Call the North Dakota Department of Health at 800.472.2286 (press 1) or go to www.ndhealth.gov/injury/ for a list of car seat checkups.

Policy vs. Politics

Policy

Health policy is a set course of action (or inaction) undertaken by governments or health care organizations to obtain a desired health outcome (Cherry & Trotter Betts, 2005).



Politics

Throughout our daily lives, politics determines who gets what, when, and how. Politics has been defined as "the process of influencing the authoritative allocation of scarce resources" (Kalisch & Kalisch, 1982, p.31).

The Legislative Process

- City
- State
- Federal







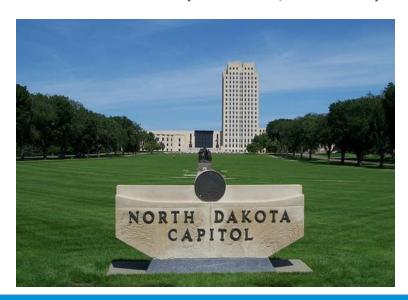
City-wide Policy

- Areas to impact city policy
 - City Council
 - Church Council
 - Parent Teachers' Organization
 - Businesses
 - School District



State-wide Policy

- Legislature (laws)
- Statewide Agencies
- Professional Organizations
- State Associations (NDMA, NDNA)



Federal Policy

- Congress and Senate
- National Associations
- National Professions Organizations



Policy On Various Levels

Texting

- Educational campaigns initiated
- School or business policy developed
- City ordinance enacted
- Statewide law passed



Statewide Legislative Activity

- Legislature meets every other year in the EVEN years (next time – January 2017 – May 2017)
- Session length is 80 days
- Legislative Council oversees legislative activity in the interim time when the legislature is not in session
- 47 legislative districts, each with 2
 Representatives (94 total) and 1 Senator (47 total)



Federal Legislative Activity

- 425 Representatives (based on population)
- 100 Senators (2 from each state)
- D.C. offices and district offices







How a Bill Becomes a Law

Legislator writes bill and presents it to the House of Representatives.

House committee studies the bill.

A hearing is held.

House committee members vote and give the House a recommendation.

House of Representatives votes. Legislator writes bill and presents it to the Senate.

Senate committee studies the bill.

A hearing is held.

Senate committee members vote and give Senate a recommendation.

Senate votes.

If passed by both Houses, Bill is sent to Governor. If Governor signs, bill becomes law. If Governor vetoes the bill. Bill is sent back to both houses for a vote. Bill becomes law if passed with 2/3 majority.







Connecting on the Federal Level







Connecting on the Federal Level

- Example: Members of Congress
- Half of all Americans have contacted their Congressman or Senators
- Hundreds of **calls** per day monthly average per office?
- 6,000 communications
- Dozens of meetings per day daily average per office?
- 13
- Same number of staff since 1975
- Most Members of Congress work 6 days per week, 10-12 hours per day
- Average Age of a Legislative Assistant in the House of Representatives 27 years old



It Is Relatively Easy To Connect In Some Way

- Share Your Knowledge
- Build Relationships
- Meet with Legislators
- Support Candidates
- Encourage Others
- Make Your Voice Heard!



Meeting With Policy Makers



- Be Punctual
- Keep it brief
- Stay on Message
- Don't Argue
- Don't have to be an Expert

- Make the Ask
- Listen
- Leave-behind Materials
- Thank Member or Staff

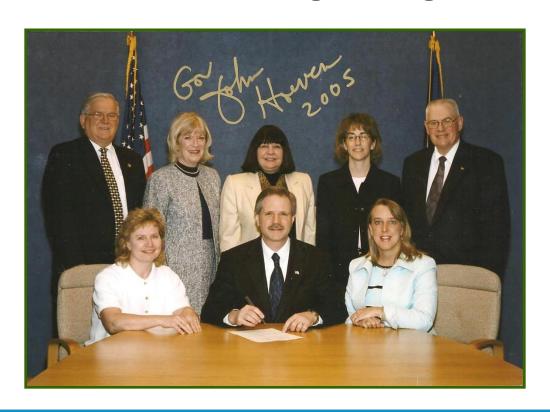
Getting Started





Where does the Governor stand once the law is passed?

 Don't go through all the work if you don't know what will happen once it makes it through the legislature.



Use your connections with political leaders to your advantage or "play it down".





Be a resource for your legislators or Congressman.

- "What can you do for them?" rather than just"what can they do for you."
- Visit them routinely.
- Introduce your self and your areas of expertise.
- Assure they have your contact areas.
- Be prepared with resources.

Find opportunities to educate your legislators (& include them in photo opportunities).



- Child Passenger Safety
 Week
- Fire Prevention Week
- "Off" years
- Special recognition weeks
- "Occurrences" involving constituents

"How much is too much?"

- Sometimes you have to pick your battles and how much you can be involved in:
 - Texting vs. bike helmet law
 - State legislative year: sprinkler system requirement, graduated drivers license, ATV, primary seat belt, childcare advocacy issues, etc.



Know how legislators want their information and how much to provide.

- Electronic vs. in-person vs. hard copies
- Full document vs. talking points



Create and provide sample letters to the editor, support letters, etc.



Wheeled Sports Sample Letters

Letter to state legislator or governor educating him/her about wheeled sports injuries to children and the effectiveness of helmets

date

The Honorable [name] [address]

Dear [title] [name

On behalf of Safe Kids [name of coalition], I write to inform you about a critical issue affecting [state's name] children: wheeled sports injuries. [Insert specific bill information if appropriate.]

As you may know, each year, approximately 130 child bicyclists in the United States are killed. Children sustain more than 257,000 nonfatal bicycle injuries and are treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments each year. In addition, 47 percent of those hospitalized because of a bike injury are diagnosed with a traumatic brain injury, the leading cause of death in bicycle crashes. Due to the fact that the presence of a head injury is the most important predictor of bicycle-related death and permanent disability, we know that properly worm helmels are a necessity, not an accessory.

In addition, other wheeled sports such as skateboarding, skating and using scooters continue to grow in popularity, and numerous injuries are associated with these activities. In 2008, there were estimated 74,841 injuries to children involving skateboards. In 2008, an estimated 6,353 skateboarding children were treated and released or examined and released or without treatment. An estimated 1,992 children were hospitalized.

An effective safely method to reduce wheeled sports-related finjuries and fatalities is the use of a helmet. Helmets have been shown to reduce the risk of brain and head injury by as much as 85 percent to 88 percent. Universal use of bicycle helmets by children ages 4 to 15 could prevent between 135 and 155 deaths, between 39,000 and 45,000 head injuries, and between 18,000 and 55,000 scalp and face injuries annually. In addition to saving lives and preventing imjuries, helmets sween morey. In fact, every bicycle helmet saves health insurers \$37 and auto insurers \$17. If 85 percent of all child cyclists wore helmets every time they rode bikes for one year, the lifetime medical cost savings could total between \$197 million to \$256 million.

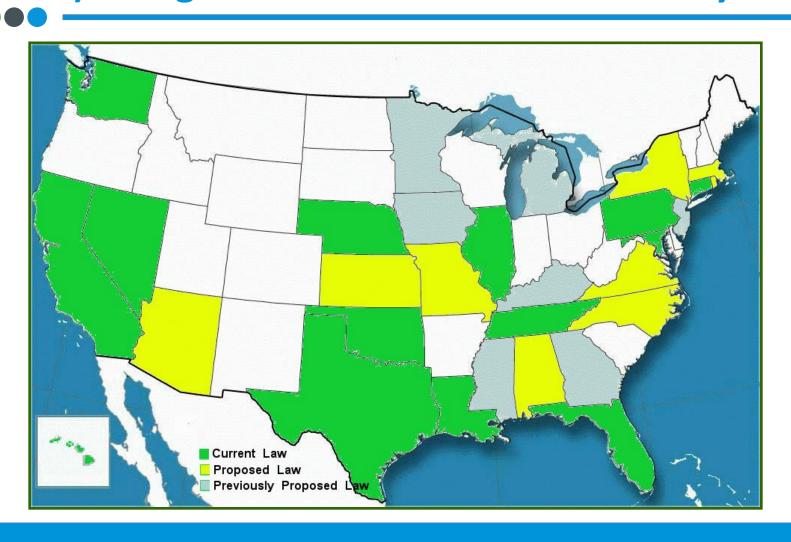
Health and safety experts agree that helmet use by children is a critical safety intervention. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) promote child helmet use as a way to protect kids from traumatic brain injury and wheeled sports-related death.

We agree with these experts that helmets work in keeping children safe. Please know that Safe Kids[name of coalition], is a source for information on the public health benefits of helmets and their proper use. If we can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me at [phone number].

Sincerely

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What are other states (counties, communities, etc.) doing and what successes have they had?

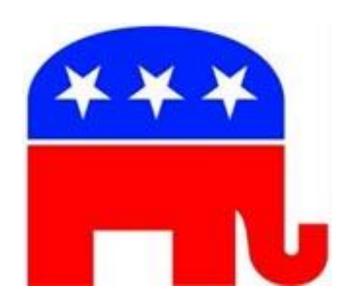


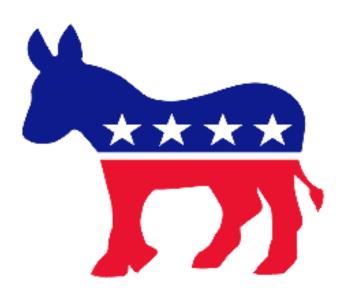
Be available to "act" at any time and have someone close at hand monitoring the progress of the bills.





Find a way to make the issue be a public health one and not Democratic or Republican





Learn how to navigate the state or national web page early so information is readily available.





Have a plan in place if/when the legislation passes.

• Consider the "effective date" based on the ability to carry out the necessary arrangements.



Remember that legislative activity is not everyone's "thing".

- Find ways to educate your coalition/partners/fellow injury prevention experts
- Identify key stakeholders who are good at this process.



The E's of Injury Prevention

Understand that "enactment" is one of the E's of injury prevention and is critical to a successful injury prevention program.

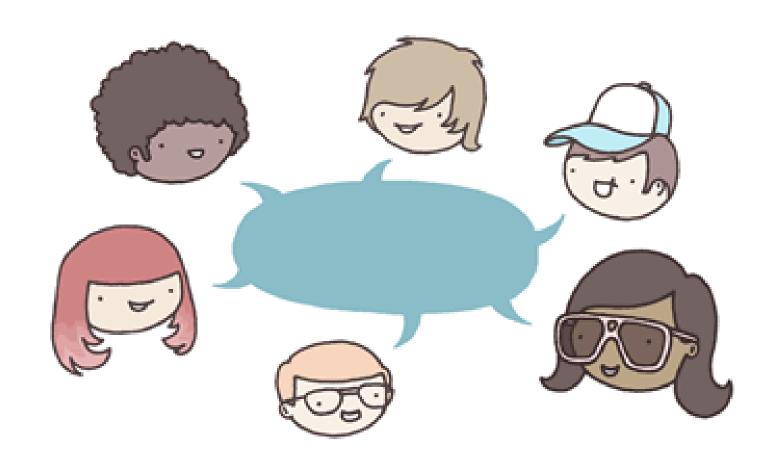
- Education
- Encouragement
- Environment
- Enactment
- Enforcement
- Evaluation



Get the media on your side.



Create/use talking points that are accurate, verifiable and impactful.



Determine who's message is most effective.





Create and form coalitions with like type causes/supporters.

Know who are your allies and your adversaries.



Pick Your Battles

Determine the areas of your legislation where you are willing to "give" so you loose only a battle and not the war.

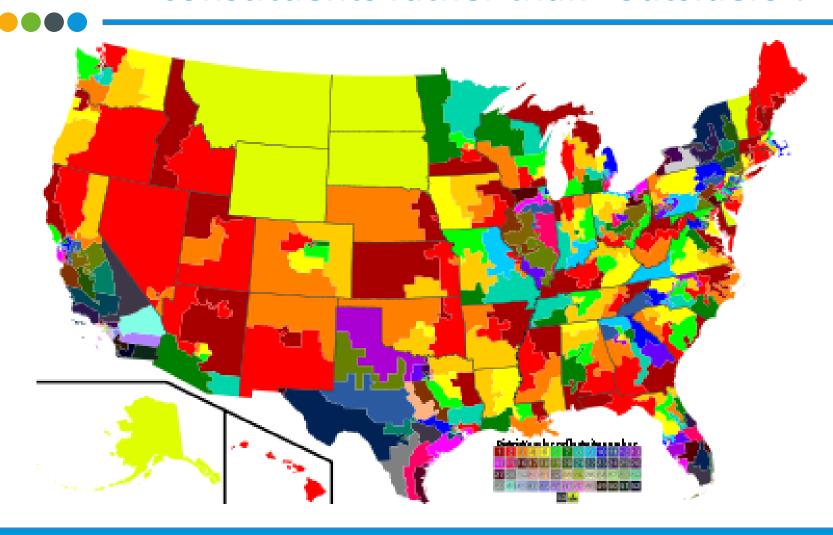


"Interview" your candidates while they are running to know where they stand on the issues.





Legislators want to hear from THEIR constituents rather than "outsiders".



What can I do?

- Be a part of the organizing "coalition" for potential legislation.
- Keep updated on potential legislation that may be coming that is relevant to your area of work.
- Connect with you local legislators as they campaign, hold town hall meetings or ask for your support.
- Seek support of your local legislators meeting at your agency, with a letter or e-mail or a person al ask.

What can I do?

- Offer to provide testimony at a committee hearing.
- Mobilize your local community people that may support the legislation.
- Assist with distributing sample letters of support to colleagues.
- Educate your local legislators on the topic so they are making an informed vote.
- Network and know that your voice, no matter how small it may seem, is IMPORTANT!!

Do SOMETHING. Do ANYTHING. Just don't do NOTHING at all!!

- Use your resources.
- Start somewhere.
- Keep at it.
- Don't let getting overwhelmed keep you from doing anything at all!!



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